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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,
THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Wolfowitz proposes global militia force against terrorism -
Milliyet
Trains collide head-on: 6 dead - Hurriyet
Another train disaster - Milliyet
Turkey's rail system neglected for 50 years - Aksam
Al-Qaeda preparing for a 'big' assassination - Milliyet
PKK member detained in US - Hurriyet
Eurocorps takes over ISAF command - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Wolfowitz: US, Turkey allies despite differences on Iraq -
Yeni Safak
US moves to build 'friendly' local forces - Radikal
Erdogan won't tolerate delays in BTC project - Zaman
Massacre looming in Najaf - Cumhuriyet
Najaf sounds the alarm - Radikal
US forces take down Kurdistan flags in Kirkuk - Zaman
Al-Qaeda member Turks detained in Pakistan - Cumhuriyet
Pakistan detains four Turks - Yeni Safak
Vatican: Turkey should join the Arab world, not Europe -
Cumhuriyet
Robin Cook works to regain UK Muslims' votes - Zaman

BRIEFING

Wolfowitz: Turkey a strong ally in fighting terrorism: US
Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz said that
regardless of Turkey's views on US policies in Iraq and
Afghanistan, the secular Muslim nation remains a very strong
ally in the fight against terrorism. Wolfowitz told the US
House Armed Services Committee that if the US remains on the
defensive, it will never win the war on terror. He added
that the US has developed close relations with several
countries in the Islamic world, particularly Indonesia and
Turkey.

PM Erdogan visits Georgia: PM Erdogan, on an official visit
to Georgia, was received on Wednesday by Georgian President
Saakashvili and met with PM Zhvania. Erdogan told the
Georgian leaders that the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil
pipeline project should be completed without further delay.
Erdogan reiterated Turkey's support for Georgia's
territorial integrity, and promised help in settling
problems between Georgia and Russia. The Turkish PM urged
Saakashvili to respect the religious freedom of Moslems
living in Georgia.

Turkey suffers new rail disaster: At least 6 people were
killed and 85 injured when two trains collided head-on near
Istanbul on Wednesday in the second major rail accident in
Turkey over the past three weeks. The incident once again
brought Turkey's decrepit railway system under the
spotlight, and has led to widespread calls for the
resignation of Transportation Minister Binali Yildirim.
Earlier this month, AK Party legislators blocked an
opposition move to censure Yildirim over the previous
accident.

Police on alert for PKK anniversary: Turkish police,
anticipating attacks on August 15, the 20th anniversary of
the establishment of the PKK, are operating on a high
security alert in major Turkish cities, "Cumhuriyet"
reports. The paper says that three PKK militants went to
major cities in western Turkey to stage 'spectacular'
attacks after receiving explosives training in Athens and on
Gabar mountain in northern Iraq.

US court arrests alleged PKK member: A US court ordered the
arrest of Ibrahim Parlak, a Turkish national with alleged
links to the PKK. It was announced that Parlak would not be
given a permanent residence permit in the US due to his

terrorist connections. Parlak was involved in a clash with security forces on Turkey's border with Syria in 1988, and was charged with the killing of two Turkish soldiers. Parlak went to the United States following his release from prison. The US court ordered the arrest based on false statements Parlak made on his application for permanent residency status.

Vatican: 'Turkey should join the Arabs': Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, doctrinal leader of the Roman Catholic Church, said that linking Turkey, a country 'in complete contrast to Europe' to the European Union would be a mistake. Ratzinger told France's "Le Figaro" newspaper that Turkey has always represented a different continent throughout its history. Ratzinger said Turkey should try to intensify its cultural relations with neighboring Arab countries instead. He added that this would not exclude cooperation between Islamic communities and the EU. Ratzinger said, for example, that Islamic countries like Turkey could work together with Europe to combat fundamentalism.

Russia lobbies for helicopter contract: Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov will come to Ankara a day before President Putin's Turkey visit to lobby for a Turkish defense contract for the purchase of 50 attack helicopters, "Cumhuriyet" reports. Ivanov will be meeting with Defense Minister Gonul to discuss the helicopter purchase, "Cumhuriyet" claims. Turkey's Defense Industry Undersecretariat (SSM) recently canceled a state contract for 145 helicopters, and opened a new tender for the purchase of 50 attack helicopters urgently needed by the military.

EDITORIAL OPINION

"As the Terror Spreads"
Fikret Bila opined in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (8/12): "Terrorism has been given a push in Turkey and is climbing speedily in the big cities and in tourist areas. Turkey had won its fight against terrorism by virtually eliminating the PKK, and for the last five years the struggle was to deal with the political problems that occurred during this process rather than to contend with terrorist activities. While Turkey was preparing to get a date from the EU for accession talks, the EU was pressuring for the political recognition of the PKK. In order to get a date, Turkey has allowed the EU to tie its hands until December 2004. During the same time period, under the new political conditions occurred with the US occupation of Iraq, the US stance was very clear on the issue of the PKK and other Kurdish groups in Northern Iraq. Ignoring Turkey's demands on these issues, Washington sided with the Kurdish groups. The US did not take any action against the PKK, even after signing on to a joint action plan with Ankara. Washington urged Ankara to approve some of its demands, including the repentance law, but fully ignored Ankara's demands. This policy of the US is a serious problem for Turkey at a time when terrorism is increasing rapidly. Turkey should question US policy on this issue very seriously. Since Turkey, although sometimes reluctantly, has supported the US in its fight against terrorism, it is Turkey's right to expect concrete action from the US on this issue. Turkey should not allow this distracted US position to continue. Turkey should also not bow to pressure by the EU and the US, and should realize that getting a date for talks from the EU and having the US fulfill its promise on the PKK are not favors given to Turkey, but rather Turkey's right. Turkey is strong enough to pursue and attain its rights. The most important thing here is for those who rule Turkey to trust themselves and their power."

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